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**PRESERVE
OR PERISH:**

**On the Future of Historical
Records in the Palmetto
State**



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

CHARLES A. DUNN, JR.

Governor

June 13, 1988

To the Citizens of South Carolina:

I congratulate the members of the State Historical Records Advisory Board on the completion of a comprehensive review of the state's historical records.

Our State's remarkable body of historical records has long been a source of pride and attention. As this report reveals, the State's historical records are a treasure of knowledge and information. The report also identifies areas where the State's historical records are in need of preservation and protection. The report also identifies areas where the State's historical records are in need of preservation and protection.

We need to work together to ensure that our historical records are preserved and protected for future generations. We need to work together to ensure that our historical records are preserved and protected for future generations. We need to work together to ensure that our historical records are preserved and protected for future generations.

South Carolina's rich history is a source of pride to us all. Few, if any, states have done as much to preserve and protect their historical records as we. And now we have a report that offers us many sound suggestions for meeting our obligations to future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Charles A. Dunn, Jr.
Governor

PRESERVE OR PERISH:

On the Future of Historical Records in the Palmetto State

A Report to the Governor • The General
Assembly • and the Citizens of South
Carolina from the State Historical
Records Advisory Board • July 1988

The historical records assessment project and publication of *Preserve or Perish* were partially supported by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

CARROLL A. CAMPBELL, JR.
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 11369
COLUMBIA 29211

June 23, 1988

To the Citizens of South Carolina:

I congratulate the members of the South Carolina Historical Records Advisory Board on the completion of this first comprehensive review of the condition of South Carolina's historical records.

Our State's remarkable body of historical records requires our care and attention. As this report reveals, many of our recordkeeping institutions, including state and local government offices, need improved security and climate controls, better training of staff in handling permanent records, and new or improved finding aids to the collections. Looking to the future, the report finds that we have yet to deal effectively with the problem of permanent records that are created and stored on an impermanent medium--magnetic computer disks.

We need to think about these issues and develop cost-effective strategies for dealing with them. Leadership from state cultural institutions must be matched by support from other parts of the community: private foundations, corporations, and, above all, the citizens themselves. Their awareness of and financial support for our cultural institutions are essential.

South Carolina's rich history is a source of pride to us all. Few, if any, states have saved as much of their written heritage as we, and none has more reason to preserve and protect it. The Advisory Board's report offers us many sound suggestions for meeting our obligations to future generations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.
Governor

CAC:jl

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PREFACE



George L. Vogt
State Historical
Records
Coordinator

This report from South Carolina's State Historical Records Advisory Board grew from a project sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). In 1980, when it appeared likely that funding of the NHPRC's grant program would be discontinued, the commission resolved to put the NHPRC's remaining funds into a project of lasting value—the preservation of America's documentary heritage. To this end, the commission offered grants to the historical records advisory boards of each state. As the bodies charged with reviewing grant proposals concerning historical records, the advisory boards were the logical recipients since they could continue the NHPRC's work. In return, the NHPRC required each board to analyze the condition of its state's historical records and to produce a report that would identify problems, suggest solutions, and provide an agenda for each board to follow should the NHPRC dissolve. South Carolina's board welcomed the opportunity to participate in the project. *Preserve or Perish* is the result.

From the State Coordinator: A Call to Action

Our state's records are too important to be left to chance preservation or well-intended (but misguided) efforts to gather, arrange, and repair them. This report from the State Historical Records Advisory Board to the citizens of South Carolina demonstrates both the distinguished documentary heritage of the state and the serious problems that we face in preserving our historical documents for centuries to come.

By design, the report highlights the problems of today rather than the considerable successes of the past; for the severity of the problems demands action not accolades. If we do nothing except read and agree with this report, we will lose historical records at an accelerating rate.

The acidic paper on which most post-Civil War documents are written will continue to crumble; computer records will continue to deteriorate; and, worst of all, we will continue to create new records on inherently unstable media. Records will continue to languish unattended in attics and cellars; institutions will miss opportunities to share information with each other; and local governments will be unable to sort the permanently valuable paper from the junk.

When you have read this report, what then? What can be done to move beyond words to action?

First, individual citizens should make certain that their local officials are aware of and concerned about these findings and recommendations. A visit, a phone call, or a letter may be in order. City and county councils need to know the facts and to take appropriate action.

Second, local cultural organizations, particularly the historical societies and library groups, should schedule some discussions of this report and engage in fact-finding about conditions in their local institutions and government offices.

Third, elected officials, both state and local, should view these issues in the context of economics and business and invest accordingly. For this state especially, with its multi-billion dollar tourism industry, historical records are an economic resource that must be preserved and developed. Local historic preservationists would be hard pressed to restore many buildings without drawings, photographs, or written descriptions; old battlefields would lose meaning without the documents to interpret them; the tens of thousands who visit South Carolina each year to research their ancestors would not leave home if our government, church, and cemetery records have crumbled to dust.

We need action now. In fifty years or less, much of the historical record that we now take for granted will cease to exist. The Library of Congress estimates that at least five percent of its books become so embrittled each year that they must be removed from service. The same "slow fires" are

George L. Vign

George L. Votaw

I. INTRODUCTION



"Tax receipts in the papers of Joseph Barnwell, whose family planted on the islands on the Savannah River... worked in South Carolina's favor in its dispute with Georgia over the state boundary line."

David Moltke-Hansen
Director
South Carolina Historical Society

Historical Records—What and Why?

What are historical records? Historical records are the varied, innumerable, and often bewildering array of material that contains important evidence about the past. The information can be on paper or in photographs, in microfilm rolls or on video tapes, in computer tapes or on optical disks. Often called archives, these records are created in both the public and the private sectors and supply information on the conditions of yesterday, the events of today, and the circumstances of tomorrow. Historical records contain information that explains our "roots"—who we are and where we come from—and they give insight into our culture.

Historical records also have immediate and practical use. They contain information that citizens may need to prove entitlement to benefits—vital records; they expose threats to health and the environment—land use permits and other records; they protect our democracy by documenting actions and exposing malfeasance—video tapes of illegal transactions and computer-based transcripts of meetings. And they do more. They provide information on policies and decisions that citizens must use if they are to plan for the future—legislative records, court records, and institutional records.

The importance of history for decision-makers has been stressed by Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, who, in their book, *Thinking in Time; The Uses of History for Decision Makers*, point out that if decision-makers "had brought into view historical evidence overlooked or not sought" they would probably not look back and wonder, as they so often do, "How in God's name did we come to do that?"¹

In assessing the condition of South Carolina's historical records, the Board discovered that despite their importance, these records are under-

valued. They are kept in impoverished repositories, they are inadequately conserved, and they are often cared for by poorly trained staff. *Preserve or Perish* describes the situation. Part I highlights what South Carolina has done to preserve its records; Part II assesses the condition of the state's program for state and local government records; Part III looks at programs for non-government records; Part IV suggests areas in which statewide services should be established; and Part V sets out steps that may be both desirable and necessary to ensure that South Carolina's valuable records survive. The heart of the report assesses the weaknesses in the state's historical records programs and suggests ways to overcome these weaknesses. In doing so, it identifies priorities for the Board's grant reviews.

South Carolinians and Their Records

Concern and indifference toward South Carolina's history and the preservation of records have existed in tandem.

In 1694, the Assembly passed an act "for the better and more certain keeping and preserving old registers and Publique Writings of this part of the Province."

In 1719, because "evil-disposed and disaffected persons" had carried off land records and acts, the Assembly was forced to pass an act "for recovering records taken."

In 1752, a hurricane battered Charleston and left the surveyor general's records "floating about in four and a half feet" of salt water. The Assembly refused to help because the surveyor had displeased them by addressing his petition for aid to the Upper House, not to them. The surveyor did what he could. He sent his papers "to ovens" and sunned and aired them when "weather would permit."²

In 1754, South Carolinians who wanted reading material from England obtained a colonial charter to incorporate the Charleston Library Society. Later members of the Society established a historical collection when they donated material on all subjects from their private holdings.

In 1855, a group headed by Frederick Porcher, a professor of history and literature at the College of Charleston, established the South Carolina Historical Society to collect and preserve information about South Carolina.

That same decade, the state arranged for John S. Green to collect, sort, and index "all records preserved by the state and relating to the colonial and revolutionary periods."³ Secession and the Civil War interrupted, and the invasion of the state destroyed and scattered many valuable records. As Sherman's troops approached Columbia, public officials and private citizens boxed and removed records of the treasury, the legislature, and other state offices. Many of these records eventually made their way back to Columbia where, according to a report by the State Historical Commission, they were "dumped by convict labor in an unused room in the third story" of the State House where they "lay in almost inextricable confusion."⁴

In 1891, the state legislature created a Public Records Commission to obtain copies of records in England that related to South Carolina's history. Sentiment for the project had been growing for over half a century, yet the legislature appropriated funds only once for the work.

In 1905, the legislature began a program to systematically care for its government records. It reorganized the State Historical Commission as an archives for government records and made it responsible for collecting state government documents, for storing them properly, and for publishing them from time to time. For the commission's work, however, the legislature provided only one small room in the State House and little money.

In 1931, Dr. Robert L. Meriwether of the University of South Carolina's History Department formed a committee to establish within the university a special collection of records documenting the state's history. By 1936, the committee had organized the South Caroliniana Society to build the collection.

Two major efforts to preserve government records in the 1930s were

undertaken in conjunction with the federal government's relief programs. The first, a cooperative venture between the Civil Works Administration project and the state's chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, began in 1933 as a program to copy "all the valuable records in our several counties both for their preservation and to give employment to many."⁵ In the next few years typists transcribed early wills from 22 pre-Civil War counties.

The second endeavor, a joint project between the federal government and the University of South Carolina, began when the same Robert L. Meriwether who helped create the South Caroliniana Society acted for the university to sponsor a major Works Progress Administration project to copy historical records. Meriwether was instrumental in the hiring of Anne King Gregorie, the first female Ph.D. from the university's history department, to head the enterprise. By 1935, Gregorie had assembled workers and prepared instructions for copying public and private paper records and tombstone inscriptions. In 1936, she became head of the Historical Records Survey, the successor program to the Civil Works Administration project. By 1942, when both projects had ended, Gregorie had, among other things, supervised the transcription of over 100,000 pages of courthouse records and had published an *Inventory of the County Archives of South Carolina*. The inventory, by listing the many records that conscientious officials in 14 counties had squirrelled away over the years, provides compelling evidence of concern for the preservation of records. It remains the most extensive catalog of the state's county records.

Historian Robert H. Woody commented on the ambivalence of South Carolinians to their records in the October 1939 issue of *The American Archivist*. Until recent years, he wrote, the public records of South Carolina were in an "unfortunate state of preservation" and lacked "any systematic organization." He marveled "that South Carolinians, notably loyal to their state and proud of her history—even to the extent of being called provincials and ancestor-worshippers—should have permitted their ancient records to moulder in basements and be scattered in various depositories." At the same time he was "impressed by the vast

amount of records" that had "been preserved in spite of wars, invasions, fires, and earthquakes."⁶

Thirteen years later, in 1952, *The American Archivist* carried another article on the subject. Its author, J. Harold Easterby, who was the director of the Historical Commission, noted that he was "one of those" who had been characterized by Woody in 1939 as being "notably loyal to their state." He declined to "endorse" Woody's suggestion that South Carolinians were provincials and ancestor-worshippers. However, he admitted "that in other parts of Mr. Woody's statement there were large elements of truth." Easterby observed that private records were "being much more successfully collected than formerly," that local organizations were "making some provision for historical markers and the State Highway Department defraying much of the expense," and that better storage facilities were being provided for the public records that were in his care.

Easterby also said that while the 1905 act giving the Historical Commission responsibility for government records was, in most respects, "adequate," he believed that "to accomplish a purpose much more is needed than an adequate law." He pointed out that from the time the agency had been charged with the care of the state's government records, it had been woefully under-funded, under-staffed, and under-housed. In 1905, he said, it received its first appropriation of \$3,500; 20 years later the sum had grown only to \$7,623, and "it was 1945 before the figure reached \$20,000." Until 1949, he said, the commission lacked "even the approximation of an adequate staff." Its original quarters, "though grandiloquently described as 'separate apartments,' were actually only an office and basement storage space in the State House." By 1936, he continued, the records had been "transferred to the World War Memorial; but it was immediately apparent that the space provided" was "entirely inadequate, and in other respects the building was not suitable as a record repository."⁷ Easterby went on to list the deficiencies of the state's archival program and to outline an ambitious agenda for the preservation of South Carolina's government records.

In 1954, with prompting from Easterby and others, the legislature

passed the Archives Act. The act gave the Historical Commission the funds and the responsibility for the collection, preservation, and publication of South Carolina's government records, and for the wording of inscriptions on historic markers. The legislation also instructed the agency to improve standards for the creation and administration of public records. However, it failed to provide either a systematic program for records management or a definition of public records.

More than 4,226 researchers visit the Search Room at the S.C. Department of Archives and History each year.



By 1957, the state had authorized construction of an archives. In 1967, it recognized the breadth of the state's archival program by renaming the Historical Commission the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. In 1973, it passed the Public Records Act.

To preserve the state's documentary heritage—and thus the interests of the public—the Public Records Act directed the Department of Archives and History to establish standards, procedures, and techniques to manage all public records. Yet ambiguities in the wording of the act—officials “may” and the Archives “should” participate in statewide records management—weaken its thrust. Vagueness about obligations of records custodians in government offices often leaves the management of records to individuals who lack the authority to conduct an effective program. As a result, the legislation makes the Department of Archives and History responsible for the records of all political subdivisions—state, county, and municipal governments, and school districts—but leaves government officials’ participation in its program voluntary.

The Department of Archives and History limits its program to the management and preservation of public records. The collection and care of private records takes place in an assortment of private repositories and under a variety of conditions. Some records are held by the two oldest repositories, the Charleston Library Society and the South Carolina Historical Society. Others are at the College of Charleston, the University of South Carolina, Winthrop College, Clemson University, and other colleges and universities that were established in the late-18th and 19th centuries and acquired collections to document their histories or to provide information to their faculties and students. A significant number are held by public libraries and local historical societies. These institutions, for the most part, have evolved into archival repositories over the last 20 years as they have accepted donations of an extraordinary number of historical records from individuals and groups. The majority of these repositories are young, poor, and local. Few enjoy regular funding, and, as a result, most are unable to care for their collections adequately.



South Carolina's program to care for its government records is run from the State Records Center on Blanding Street (above) and the Archives Building on Senate Street (right).



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In three sections of this report—Part II, Public Records (State Government Records and Local Government Records); Part III, Non-Government Records; and Part IV, Statewide Services—the Board assesses the conditions under which South Carolina’s historical records exist today and highlights areas in which there are common problems for which coordinated solutions should be developed. The findings and recommendations for each of these sections are summarized here and are explained fully in Parts II, III, and IV.

State Government Records

Finding 1. Portions of South Carolina’s Public Records Act are inadequate to ensure the preservation of state government records.

Recommendation. Present laws must be strengthened and future legislation monitored to clarify the Department of Archives and History’s authority and to ensure adequate support for the state records management program.

Finding 2. Many officials in South Carolina’s agencies, colleges, and universities are unaware of the benefits of effective records programs and often fail to follow procedures for retaining and disposing of records.

Recommendation. The Department of Archives and History should refine and strengthen its records management program to educate and encourage state officials to assume greater responsibility for the management of their records.

Finding 3. State government’s increased use of automation and telecommunications presents new challenges to the state’s records preservation efforts.

Recommendation. State employees should work together to clearly express and solve records management and archival problems relating to the creation, use, and preservation of machine-readable records.

Finding 4. Traditionally, archivists and records managers have worked

independently. This approach has become increasingly inappropriate and has left many 20th-century state government records inaccessible. **Recommendation.** Archivists and records managers should work together to streamline procedures so that backlogs are eliminated and transfers of records are accessible.

Finding 5. Despite the tremendous growth of South Carolina state government in the 20th century, little documentation of recent state administration is being preserved.

Recommendation. The state should begin a program to locate and collect the documentation of the issues and activities of state government.

Finding 6. The increased fragility of the modern records threatens to rob future generations of historical documentation.

Recommendation. The state should plan to buy up-to-date conservation equipment and to construct appropriate work areas that will enable the Department of Archives and History to meet the conservation demands of modern formats and to provide conservation services statewide.

Finding 7. The facilities of the Department of Archives and History—both the Archives building and the State Records Center—are no longer adequate for storing and servicing the state's archival records.

Recommendation. The state should plan for the construction of a spacious, modern archives.

Local Government Records

Finding 1. Many valuable local government records are unidentified, and thus unprotected, because the state's procedures for scheduling local records for management and disposition are inadequate.

Recommendation. The Department of Archives and History should develop general schedules and give the staffs in local government offices the training they need to inventory their records and to draft their own schedules. The state should find a way to monitor compliance.

Finding 2. Of all the valuable local records that remain unsecured, the problems of the state's municipal records are the most pressing.

Recommendation. The state should establish a cooperative records management program to care for municipal government records.

Finding 3. Local government's archival records are seldom stored in secure, controlled environments, and the state lacks a strategy to correct the situation.

Recommendation. South Carolina should start a statewide program to encourage local governments to provide protected, secure facilities to store local government records.

Finding 4. Valuable information is endangered because programs to microfilm local government records are inadequate and often fail to meet archival standards.

Recommendation. The state should make a local records microfilming program part of a statewide records management system, publish standards, and provide for the certification of all microfilming programs.

Finding 5. The problems of preserving local government records are too large and the resources of any single institution too small to create and discharge records management programs that will meet the requirements of the Public Records Act.

Recommendation. A uniform statewide local records management program should be developed to meet the needs of local government. The Department of Archives and History should coordinate and systematize the program, and local governments should be given specific areas of authority and responsibility.

Non-Government Records

Finding 1. Most of the repositories surveyed focus on activities other than the care of historical records. As a result, records usually compete unsuccessfully with books and artifacts for scant funding.

Recommendation. A statewide consortium of colleges, universities, public libraries, and historical records repositories should be formed to suggest ways to consolidate collections or share resources.

Finding 2. Few of the repositories surveyed assigned professionals to care for their historical records. Only three institutions have more than five staff members for this purpose. Many institutions borrow staff from other programs, some use volunteers, and 31 percent employ no archival staff.

Recommendation. The state's major repositories should work with South Carolina educational institutions and professional associations to develop professional training programs for staff in all repositories holding historical records.

Finding 3. Access to the information in historical records is limited for many reasons. Records are often described insufficiently, and 54 percent of the repositories surveyed do not report their holdings to anyone.

Recommendation. Repositories should make their archival records accessible through the publishing of their holdings, the compilation of indexes, and the regular dissemination of the information.

Finding 4. Conditions in many repositories are inadequate. Most lack the security, and the temperature, humidity, and fire controls that archival documents demand.

Recommendation. Repositories that accept historical records should provide appropriate care or deposit the records elsewhere.

Statewide Services

Finding 1. No single group provides statewide leadership to plan ways to solve the problems associated with South Carolina's historical records programs.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should be established in state law and should provide leadership for statewide planning for the state's historical records programs.

Finding 2. This report indicates a pressing need for a program to obtain, for preservation and access, information on holdings of historical records statewide.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should form a task force to plan an automated statewide network containing information about the location, condition, and content of the state's historical records.

Finding 3. The volunteers and skilled professionals who care for the state's archival records need and want more training.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should enlist representatives from historical records repositories, schools, and professional associations to identify training requirements and devise solutions.

Finding 4. There is an urgent need to identify and preserve records not yet in any archives because many subjects relating to South Carolina history are underdocumented.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should create a system to identify and locate these records and to provide for their care.

Finding 5. Public support is essential for the effectiveness of South Carolina's archival programs, especially in times of tight budgets, yet the state's archival community does not have a campaign to promote the use of historical records and enlist support for issues affecting their preservation.

Recommendation. South Carolina's archival community should promote historical records programs by developing ways to educate citizens on the value of historical records.

II. SOUTH CAROLINA'S PUBLIC RECORDS PROGRAM

Introduction

State law gives South Carolina's Department of Archives and History and its eleven commissioners responsibility for the care of state government records (records of agencies, colleges, and universities) and South Carolina's local government records (records of county and municipal governments, and school districts). In caring for these records, the Archives aspires to the standards for the care of public records that archivist and historian Ernst Posner set out in his 1964 *American State Archives*. That the agency's programs fall short becomes apparent when Posner's ideals, which are listed here, are contrasted with the realities of the state and local records programs, which are described below. To meet Posner's standards, the Archives should have:

1. Legal authority—its legal authority should detail the functions it will perform, the type of the collections it will care for, and its jurisdiction.
2. Adequate resources—its funding should cover all necessary plant, personnel, equipment, and supplies.
3. Adequate physical facilities—its housing should meet all demands for archival preservation and service. It should be secure, have temperature and humidity controls, and provide public access.
4. Well defined collection policies—it should define the scope of its collection by taking into consideration the acquisition policies of other repositories and developing a strategy to coordinate and cooperate rather than to compete.
5. Records management services—before the Archives acquires records, its archivists (staff who acquire, preserve, and make the records accessible) and records managers (staff who achieve economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use, preservation, and disposal of records), working together, should appraise the records and write

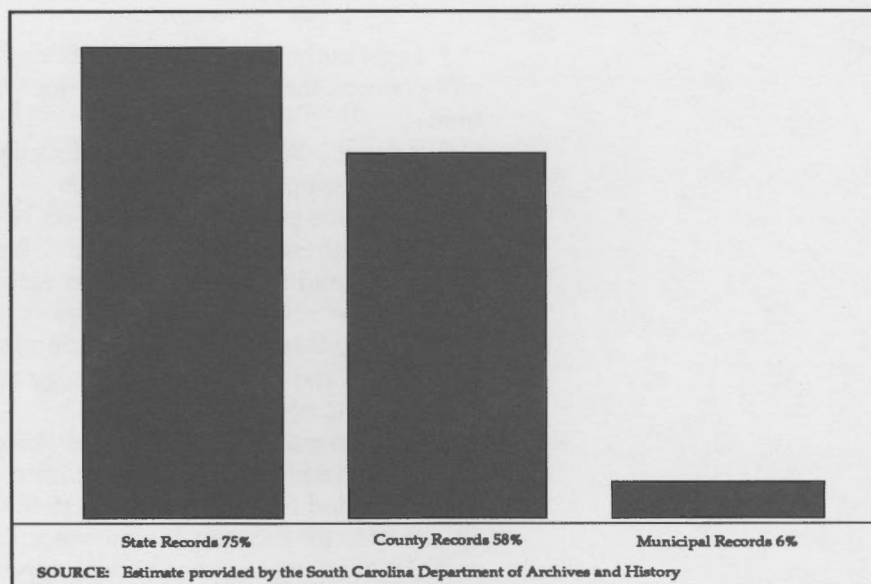
records schedules, which determine what the life history, or disposition, of the records will be. Schedules are essential to sound records management programs and are a vital link in the life cycle of records. Schedules include a timetable showing which records should be microfilmed as well as how long active records should be kept where they are, which inactive records should be destroyed, and when inactive records of permanent value should be transferred to the repository for preservation.

6. Conservation services—it should have conservation services, either on the premises or readily available outside, to protect the records from deterioration.

7. Arrangement and description services—it should organize its collections and provide useful descriptions.

8. Access services—it should have an adequately equipped and staffed research room and copying facilities, and it should provide inventories and other guides that document its holdings.

Percentage of South Carolina's records covered by retention/disposition schedules.



STATE GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Historical Background

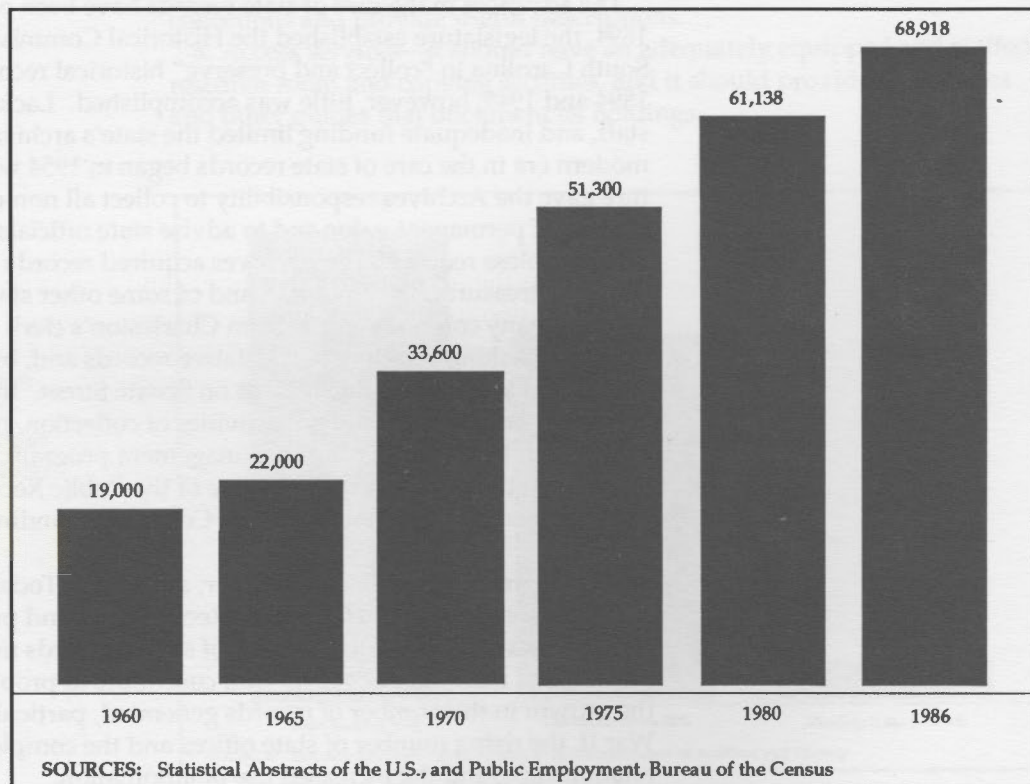
The advances in the care of state records have been considerable. In 1894, the legislature established the Historical Commission of the State of South Carolina to "collect and preserve" historical records. Between 1894 and 1949, however, little was accomplished. Lack of space and staff, and inadequate funding limited the state's archival work. The modern era in the care of state records began in 1954 when the legislature gave the Archives responsibility to collect all non-current state records of permanent value and to advise state officials on the disposition of useless records. The Archives acquired records of the secretary of state, the treasurer, the governor, and of some other state offices, and secured many colonial records from Charleston's clerk of court. It also began publishing a variety of legislative records and, by 1957, was authorized to construct an archives on Senate Street. In 1965 the Archives expanded its traditional activities of collection, preservation, and publication to include a records management program. The legislature recognized the program with passage of the Public Records Act in 1973 and the opening of the State Records Center on Blanding Street in 1976.

The program's limitations, however, are many. Today, inadequate resources, weaknesses in the Public Records Act, and public officials who are unaware of the importance of sound records management or of the value of many public records, all contribute to problems. So, too, do the growth in the number of records generated, particularly after World War II, the rising number of state offices and the complexity of their relationships, and the increased use of automation.

There are vast gaps in the Archives' documentation of 20th-century events. Records of New Deal and Great Society programs are still "out there" somewhere waiting to be identified, scheduled, transferred, and conserved.

In addition, the agency's facilities are not large or modern enough. The program is less efficient because the staff is split between the State Records Center and the Archives building; work areas are cramped; the environmental control system is inadequate and often breaks down; the conservation laboratory is out-dated; and there is too little space for the public.

*Growth of state
government:
number of full
time employees.*



Findings and Recommendations State Government Records

Finding 1. South Carolina's Public Records Act is inadequate to ensure the preservation of valuable state government records.

a) The Public Records Act of 1973 gives the Archives responsibility for management and preservation of records of state government, but limits its effectiveness by not making clear the responsibilities of the records custodians and, on the administrative level, of records officers in state institutions. It makes the "official in charge of an office having public records" the records "custodian," allows the custodian to appoint a records officer, but is silent on the administrative level the records officer should hold and on the custodian's liabilities if responsibilities are delegated. As a result, the administration of records in many state institutions is delegated to personnel who lack the authority to care for them.

b) In 1982, the state attorney general ruled that "until a public record is created, the Archives," by virtue of the Public Records Act, "generally possesses no regulatory authority, especially with respect to another public agency." The ruling seems to contradict the provision in the act that directs the Archives to "give advice and assistance to public officials in the solutions of their problems in creating . . . public records," and puts at risk the information stored in machine-readable formats, for its permanence, in part, depends on the way machine-readable formats are created.

Recommendation. Present laws must be strengthened and future legislation monitored to clarify the Department of Archives and History's authority and to ensure adequate support for the state records management program.

A group composed of professional archivists, records administrators, state officials, and legislators should work together to amend the present legislation and to monitor all future legislation to:

- a) Meet the practical needs of a records program.
- b) Secure information that is stored in machine-readable records.
- c) Maintain the effectiveness of the state's records management program.



"Retention schedules tell new staff that they are supposed to create this, this, and this, they tell them when to break a file, how to file, and how long a file is to be kept . . . that's a benefit to management."

Duane Daniels
Records Officer
Office of South
Carolina
State Treasurer

Finding 2. Many officials in South Carolina's state agencies, colleges, and universities are unaware of the benefits of an effective records program and often fail to implement retention and disposition procedures in records schedules.

Records management programs save space and allow the identification and separation of archival records from records of short-term value. In its 22-year existence, the state's records management program has saved the taxpayer an estimated \$11 million and has secured a significant number of valuable records. Despite the gains, however, few state institutions maintain effective records programs because most fail to comply with scheduling procedures. Although records schedules specifying retention and disposition procedures have been written for 75 percent of the state institutions, 60 percent of the institutions are still short of space. Many institutions fail to transfer records of permanent value to the Archives or to replace records with microfilm as instructed. In addition, 62 percent of the institutions are using schedules that are over five years old and need revision to reflect changes in filing methods or content, yet only 35 percent have requested the revisions.

Noncompliance can be attributed, in part, to weaknesses in the Public Records Act. The act neither compels state institutions to create records programs nor assigns authority to the records officers who carry them out (see Finding 1a). But there are other reasons as well. Many officials are unacquainted with the benefits of a well-run records program because the scheduling review process that the Archives conducts often crushes their enthusiasm for establishing a records program. The process is complicated and lengthy and can delay, for months, the return of schedules to state institutions. In addition, although 93 percent of state institutions want a records manual that sets out records management procedures and institution responsibilities, none has been published.

Recommendation. The Department of Archives and History should refine and strengthen its records management program to educate and encourage state officials to assume greater responsibility for the protection and management of their records. The Archives should:

a) Cooperate with agency officials and state university and college archivists to determine individual records management needs and to establish a state government records management program in offices without one.

b) Conduct a program that uses models of interagency cooperation—Carolina Healthstyles or Materials Management—to encourage state institutions to participate in a records program.

c) Simplify and speed up its schedule review procedures and establish general schedules for categories of records common to many state institutions.

d) Provide training for records officers and establish an information network to keep them up-to-date by publishing a records management manual, holding workshops and training sessions, and distributing a statewide newsletter.

e) Develop ways to protect information by monitoring records management programs and compliance to records schedules by strengthening the Archives' legal authority (see Recommendation 1a), and by working with the Legislative Audit Council to expose records management problems.

Finding 3. State government's increased use of modern office technology—automation and telecommunications—presents new challenges to the state's records preservation efforts.

New office machines capable of storing and manipulating enormous amounts of information are creating machine-readable records and replacing the banks of filing cabinets and paper records traditionally found in state offices. For archivists and records managers, the records created by this new technology present fresh challenges. The equipment to create, read, store, and process the information contained in machine-readable records—magnetic tapes, disks, and other media—requires technical expertise and programming skills that archivists and records managers usually lack. As a result, archivists and records managers are unable to help create state government data bases or to plan files conversion, and they are ill-equipped to develop the new record retention and disposition guidelines that these new formats demand. Developing standards and procedures to ensure the preservation of the information created by this new technology requires the cooperation of all.



Office automation and data processing require a new approach to records management.





"We are automated, but we haven't really looked into the problem of storing the information on computer discs... in fact we haven't looked at scheduling or how to even deal with it yet."

Stan Thompson
Records Officer
South Carolina Department of Social Services

Recommendation. The state should find ways to solve archival problems relating to the creation, use, and preservation of machine-readable records.

a) The Archives should provide its records managers and archivists with training to give them the technical expertise and programming skills they need to manage and preserve machine-readable records.

b) The Division of Information Resource Management should establish an advisory panel composed of its own staff, Archives' staff, and data processing specialists from institutions such as the University of South Carolina and Clemson University to define the problems of, and to develop written standards and policies for, the preservation of machine-readable records.

c) The Archives should then initiate a pilot project on the preservation of machine-readable records in a medium-sized agency.

Finding 4. Traditionally, archivists and records managers have worked independently. This approach has become increasingly inappropriate and has left many 20th-century state government records inaccessible.

Until 1933, about 800 cubic feet of state records covering the first two centuries of South Carolina history were piled on the floor in the basement of the State House. Alexander Salley, South Carolina's first state archivist, said of the task of processing the records, "I who am better acquainted with these records than anyone alive could not do justice to them—could not make a correct statement as to what is here."⁸

State archivists since Salley have worked at the time-consuming tasks of deciphering the mixture of records, restoring them to their original order, describing them, and item-indexing selected records such as legislative papers. The meticulous work of preserving and making accessible the older records of state government, however, has left archivists with little time for the 20th-century records that records managers have been scheduling for transfer to the Archives, or to work more closely with records managers to prevent duplication of effort. As a result, many 20th-century records remain unprocessed, gaps in state government archives are unidentified, and information retrieval is impossible.

"Archives and records management pursue their own particular courses, coming into contact or collision from time to time on such issues as appraisal and accessions."

Roy H. Tryon
"An Assessment of South Carolina's Archives and Records Management Program"
January 1988

The situation is critical. These records are inaccessible to researchers in general and state institutions in particular. Eighty-one percent of the creating institutions anticipate a need to retrieve information in their transferred records. Sixty-one percent are requesting finding aids.

Recommendation. Archivists and records managers should streamline procedures to eliminate present backlogs and make transfers of state government records accessible.

a) Management should coordinate the work of its archives and records management sections so that archivists and records analysts can develop a more systematic approach to state government records scheduling and archival records transfers.

b) Inefficiencies should be eliminated by:

- 1) abandoning item-indexing of most series;
- 2) developing series descriptions that will be used throughout the life-cycle of records;
- 3) preparing a guide to state government archives holdings;
- 4) developing a way to identify gaps in state government archives as the archives are acquired.

c) Gaps in state government archives should be identified in conjunction with preparation of the guide recommended above, and priorities should be set to fill the gaps.

Finding 5. Despite the growth of South Carolina state government in the 20th-century, little documentation of recent state administration is being preserved.

Although 20th-century programs such as the New Deal and the Great Society have increased legislative activity and created an enormous number of state records documenting many issues including the civil rights movement, educational improvements, and rural development, the Archives holds little documentation for these recent and active phases of state government. This deficiency is caused, in part, by the failure of many institutions to transfer their records as scheduled (see Finding 2). But it is also caused by the absence of a strategy to document an issue that involves more than one office. It can no longer be assumed that the records available in one state government office will

"Despite long and active attention to its governmental records . . . the state still has critical needs to expand, protect, and develop the historical record."

R. Nicholas
Olsberg
"Report to the
Advisory Board"

provide adequate documentation of an issue because the growth of state government has blurred jurisdictional lines. The Education Improvement Act, for example, has left a paper trail of studies, plans, and ideas across any number of offices—state and federal, public and private. At stake, therefore, is the preservation of information that was created at great taxpayer expense and has importance not only for historians but for today's policy makers as well.

Recommendation. The state should begin a program to locate and collect the archival documentation of the ongoing issues and activities of state government.

a) A task force of archivists, historians, and government officials should use the documentation strategies developed by the model task force described in Statewide Services Recommendation 4d to launch a pilot program to gather the records concerning a recent activity such as the Education Improvement Act.

b) Archivists and records managers should be required to research and understand the complexities of today's inter-governmental relationships before they begin to follow the paper trail left by one issue.

Finding 6. The increased fragility of the modern state government records threatens to rob future generations of historical documentation.

The growth of modern state government has meant the proliferation of paper, tape, and other formats that, compared with pre-1870 paper and ink, are delicate. The magnitude of the conservation problem increases yearly. Records transferred to the Department of Archives and History for permanent storage require treatment and are accumulating at a rate of over 400 cubic feet annually. In addition, the conservation services the Archives offers are in demand from public officials and private citizens. Conservation is a vital part of archival preservation, and the Archives' conservation lab is the only large one in the state.

The conservation laboratory at the Department of Archives and History offers the most up-to-date preservation techniques in the state, but because of outdated equipment, it can only restore individual docu-



The historians have not done a good job of documenting the twentieth century in South Carolina ... we could do a great deal more than we have done, but the Archives has to make the twentieth-century records available."

Tom Terrill
Historian
University of South

ments. It lacks the equipment, supplies, and space needed to use the mass preservation techniques dictated by modern records and by a rising demand for services. Budgets for the conservation laboratory have been unrealistically low. About \$300,000 is needed to provide more efficient equipment and additional space that is required if the Archives is to meet demands for conservation services now and in the future.

Recommendation. The state should plan to buy up-to-date conservation equipment and to construct work areas that will enable the Department of Archives and History to meet the conservation demands of modern formats and to provide conservation services statewide.

The Department of Archives and History should devise a more efficient conservation work area, and it should, in conjunction with Recommendation 7, secure funds to buy the equipment needed to conduct statewide conservation services.

Finding 7. The Archives building and the State Records Center are no longer adequate for storing and servicing the state's archival records.

a) Space constraints inhibit:

1) an effective records management program because the buildings lack the space to store all the records that are scheduled;

2) the productivity of staff because records must be processed in overcrowded areas and because staff members are divided between the Records Center and the Archives;

3) the storage of new accessions of magnetic media, microfilm, audio and videotape because of the security vault's limited capacity;

4) the inauguration of public programs because there is no space for training sessions and other educational events.

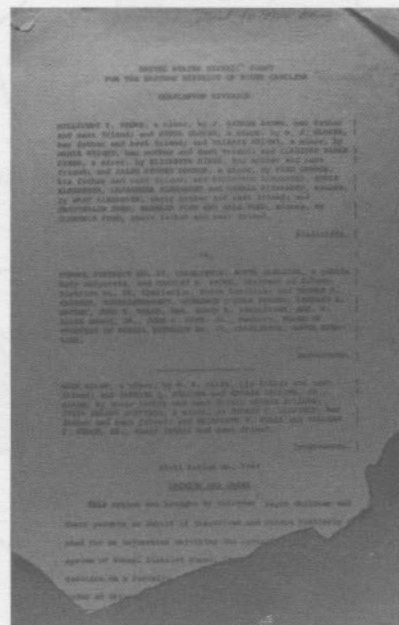
b) Environmental controls in the Senate Street building where the records of permanent value are stored are outdated. As a result, the records are the victims of fluctuating temperatures and humidity.

Recommendation. The state should construct a spacious, modern archival facility.

The Archives should conduct a study to:

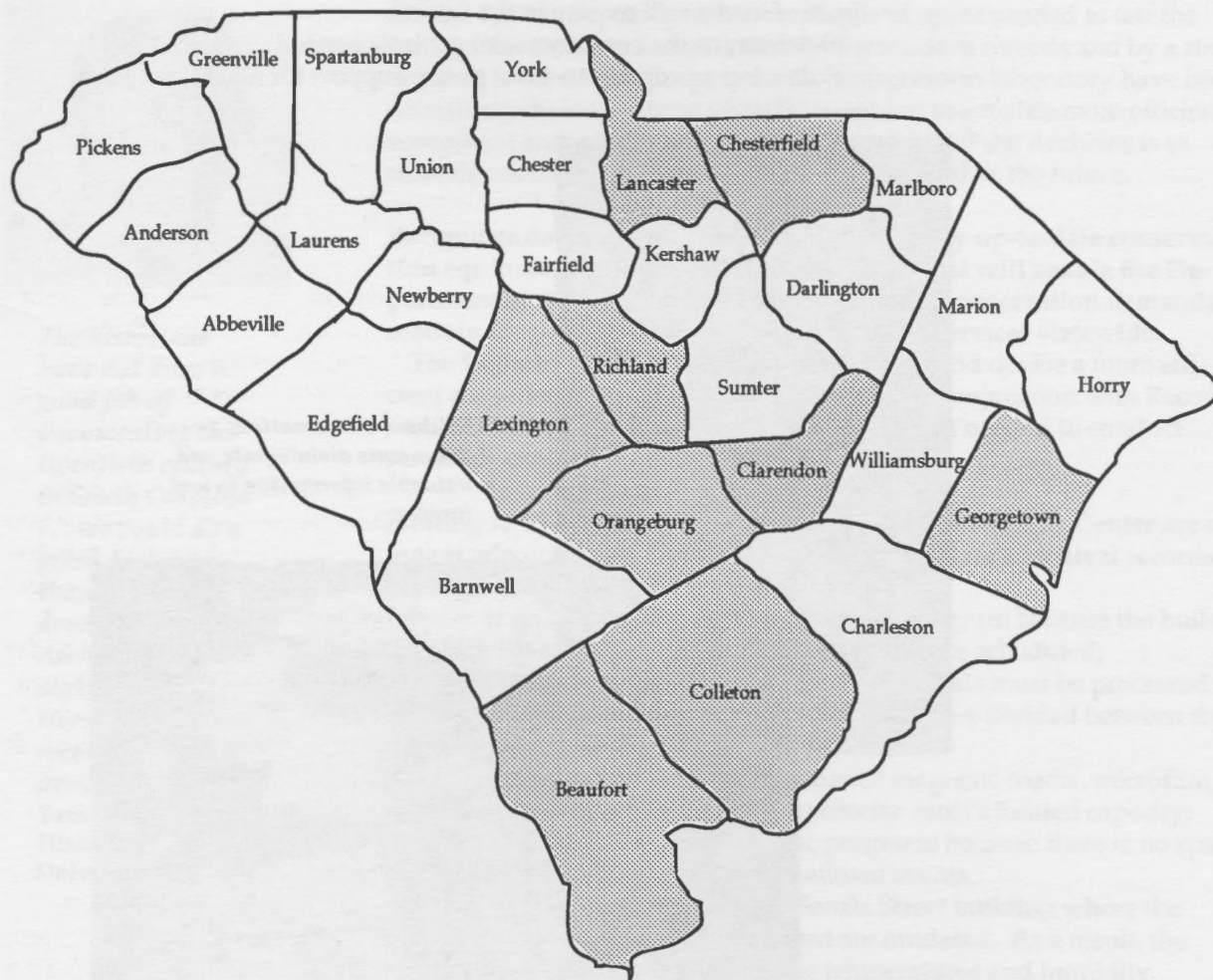
a) estimate the storage space that the growing number and various

- types of media will require in the future;
- b) determine the environmental controls needed;
 - c) develop a program to enlist public support for a new building.



*Without conservation,
documents disintegrate and
valuable information is lost
forever.*





Records from these South Carolina counties were burned during the Civil War.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Historical Background

Unlike most English colonies in what became the United States, South Carolina had no effective local government. Government officials conducted their business and kept their records in the colonial capital, Charleston. Decentralization began in 1785, two years after the Revolutionary War ended, when the state legislature passed the County Court Act. Twenty counties were laid out within five of the seven judicial districts that had been created in 1769. Officials in these political subdivisions were soon filling minute books and filing papers in a way that in the past had been done only in Charleston. The dual system of counties and districts continued until 1800 when the legislature abolished counties and created new judicial districts. There would eventually be 30 districts and they would become the focus of local government until the Civil War. Local officials kept their records in district courthouses and sometimes sent copies to the state capital in Columbia. The legislature encouraged careful record keeping by establishing uniform standards for local offices in 1839. It attempted to enforce compliance by instructing the state circuit solicitor to make yearly inspections.

The Civil War and its aftermath changed the number and the nature of local records. Records from 10 of the 30 pre-Civil War counties were burned. Reconstruction and the 1868 Constitution gave local areas some autonomy with the result that local records documenting finance, health services, public utilities, education, and administration proliferated.

The first major effort to preserve local records began in the 1930s when the federal government, to reduce unemployment, made money available for relief programs. The cooperative ventures between the federal

government and the South Carolina chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and between the federal government and the University of South Carolina, led not only to the transcription of wills and courthouse records but also to a drive by the University of South Carolina to preserve local records. In 1937, the university secured legislation that named it the central repository for valuable inactive local government records.

The state's commitment to a comprehensive archival program for local government records began in the 1950s. With passage of the 1954 Archives Act, the state made the Archives the official repository for local government records. This linked the state's program for local records to its program for state records and directed that local records that had gone to the university be sent to the Archives. The Archives arranged to have the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints microfilm local government records. Church staff could film the state's local government records if they deposited a copy of the film with the agency. Under this arrangement, which lasted until 1964, the state received film of many of its pre-Civil War local records.

The Archives enjoyed adequate funding and remarkable growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It acquired its own microfilming equipment, and it launched a program to save local records. Staff members now call the procedures for saving the records during those halcyon years the "county blitz." The staff targeted a county based on need and the likelihood of success, requested permission from local officials, and then moved in. They inventoried, appraised, microfilmed, and transferred the records of one county and then proceeded to the next. The press of modern paperwork had relegated many older records to attics, basements, and other storage areas where conditions shocked the staff. Nonetheless, the results were impressive. Before the end of 1972, they had microfilmed or transferred to the agency many of the older records from nine counties created in 1785, had restored hundreds of papers and volumes, and had helped dispose of records of little value. They had also refiled some of the records already available on microfilm through the agreement with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

because the church's film did not meet archival standards.

The Public Records Act of 1973 directed the Archives to establish a records management program for local government records. For a short time after its passage, staff members continued the county blitz, tailor-making records management systems as they went and writing records schedules. They filmed or transferred various records including many estate files and court documents and began a program to preserve on microfilm information in land records created before 1920. As a result, the Archives has strong pre-1900 holdings from many counties and microfilm of most land records up to 1920. Budgeting problems in the late 1970s, however, shifted Archives' funds away from local records, and the blitz ceased. A steady erosion of resources changed the state's active local records program into a reactive, service-oriented one.

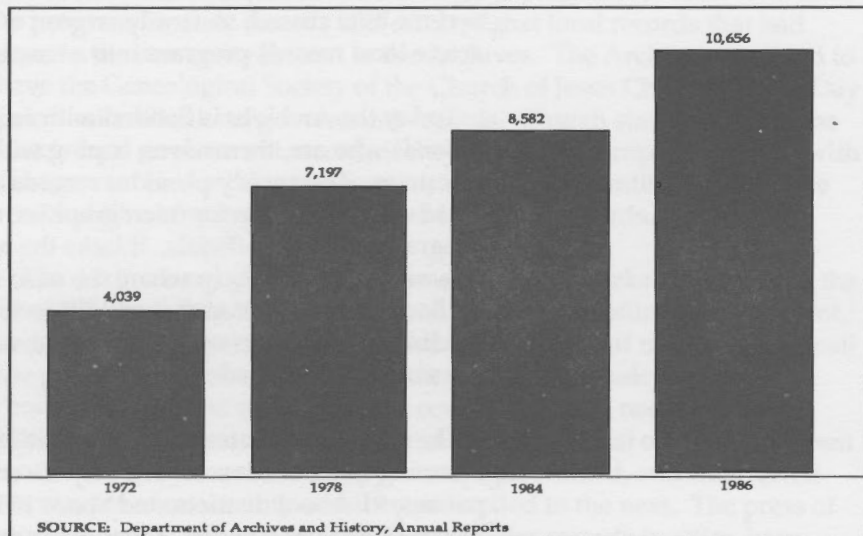
Today the Archives is flooded with requests for help from local officials who are, themselves, coping with the problems of limited resources. The agency provides records management advice, maintains an advisory program for micrographics, and administers two microfilm programs for local officials. It lacks the resources to grant all requests, however, and must help where the need is greatest. Records damaged by flood or fire or those that will fill serious gaps in the Archives' holdings of older records, for example, take precedence over those that are simply stored inadequately.

The situation threatens the preservation of the information in an alarming number of records. Forty-six county governments, 269 municipalities, 91 school districts, and about 185 special service districts are all generating many records. The records demand efficient management, but their numbers are too great for one institution to manage. The Archives is unable even to respond quickly to the requests it receives for help. Consultations with local officials rose from 23 in 1975 to 2,181 in 1987. Also, the Archives' jurisdiction is unclear. The Archives Act of 1954 and the Public Records Act of 1973 left the prerogative for cooperation with local officials, and the Judicial Reform Act of 1972 placed administrative authority over all courts and all court records with the

Court Administration, the executive arm of the South Carolina Supreme Court.

Archival records are stored under conditions that create different problems. Those that have been transferred to the Archives create one set. Between 1971 and 1987, the Archives had a 264 percent increase in the records it received for short-term or long-term retention from state and local government. As a result the agency is inundated with processing backlogs and its facilities are strained. All the records must be stored, many will need extensive conservation, all require arrangement, some must be microfilmed, and local records must compete with state records for the Archives' space and staff.

Cubic feet of records transferred to State Records Center.



Records still in local government offices pose different, though more pressing, problems. Most are unscheduled, many are cared for by officials who are unaware of their value and the need for conservation, most are improperly stored and those recently generated are particularly vulnerable because the life span of their formats is often no more than a few short years.

The single most frustrating experience that I have had was the destruction by water damage or fire of court records that had held a very good record of a murder trial that I wanted to write about."

Tom Terrill
Historian
University of South
Carolina

Findings and Recommendations

Local Government Records

Finding 1. Many valuable local government records are unidentified, and thus unprotected, because the state's procedures for scheduling local records for management and disposition are inadequate.

Records schedules control and protect records by establishing retention periods for active records and providing for their disposition when they become inactive. Although state law requires local governments that schedule records to follow the Archives' guidelines, many local records remain unscheduled. There are several reasons for this. The law does not require local officials to initiate scheduling. Many local government officials do not know how to schedule their records. And finally, the Archives lacks the resources to do all the scheduling itself. There are too many records and scheduling is time consuming because inventories must first be prepared. The use of general schedules, which tell how to deal with records common to various offices within an organization, is limited to a few court records. About 58 percent of county records and almost all municipal records are unprotected because they are unscheduled. And the over 2,500 schedules that have been written for records from 27 of the state's 46 counties provide insufficient protection because there is no way to monitor compliance.

Recommendation. The Department of Archives and History should develop general schedules and provide employees in local government offices with the training they need to inventory their records and to draft their own schedules. The state should find a way to monitor compliance.

- a) The Archives should develop general schedules to help local officials efficiently manage records common to local government offices statewide—conveyance books, financial records, administrative records, for example—and should use as a guide, the general schedules designed for court records by the Archives and the Court Administration.
- b) The Archives should train all local officials in scheduling procedures as part of the statewide program recommended above. Training

seminars and workshops are now held too seldom (only once or twice a year) and reach too few (only individuals who can get to Columbia).

c) The State Historical Records Advisory Board, the Association of County Governments, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, the Association of County School District Superintendents, and the Archives should form a task force to create an automated data base to ensure full participation in the scheduling process and to monitor the implementation of the schedules.

Finding 2. Of all the valuable local records that remain unsecured, the problems of the state's municipal records are the most pressing.

Municipal government in South Carolina is over 200 years old. Charleston's was the first in 1783, Camden followed in 1791, Beaufort in 1803, and Columbia and Georgetown in 1805. Because the state's cities provide many services and have often been political, mercantile, and manufacturing centers, the records they create document important historical trends. Today the state has 269 municipalities, each producing records at an alarming rate as the services they provide multiply. State law directs the Department of Archives and History to care for these records, but most remain unprotected because the agency lacks the resources to develop the comprehensive program demanded. Surveys taken indicate that records from 94 percent of the municipalities are not protected by records schedules and that records from 33 percent of the state's municipalities have been destroyed either intentionally—during a move or a clean-up of storage areas—or accidentally, often by fire.

Recommendation. The state should establish a cooperative records management program designed for municipal records.

The number of cities and the complexity of the records demand creation of a separate program. Municipal officials, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, and the Department of Archives and History should develop legislation to establish the program. The Archives should be given money to staff a Municipal Records Division; the Archives with the Municipal Association of South Carolina should establish policies and procedures for the uniform management of municipal records and for



"In some counties, documents are stored where people smoke, drink, and eat . . . it's always very surprising to me to see attorneys working with records with cigarettes hanging out of their mouths and drinking a cup of coffee . . ."

Michael Trinkley
Archaeologist
Chicora Foundation

coordination of services; the Archives, through its Municipal Government Section, should provide municipal officials with training and consultation services.

Finding 3. Local government's archival records are seldom stored in secure, controlled environments, and the state lacks a way to correct the situation.

Before 1981, schedules written for all permanently valuable records called for the transfer of the records to secure, environmentally controlled storage space in the Archives. Most counties transferred some records, 10 transferred many. Two developments, however, halted transfers—residents often objected strongly to having "their" records moved, and the storage areas in the Archives were reaching capacity as local records competed with records from state agencies. As a result, schedules written for local records after 1981 directed the transfer of permanently valuable inactive records to any storage area approved by the Archives. This satisfied the opponents of off-site storage and reduced the number of records competing for the dwindling space in the Archives. However, most counties have not begun building secure, environmentally controlled storage areas. Few storage areas in the state today provide the security and environmental controls needed to protect local government's valuable records. Many local officials believe that the responsibility for their care lies with state, not local, government. Over 80 percent of county and school district officials say that a lack of storage space is an immediate, pressing concern. Most local officials, because they lack resources, must relegate their inactive records to basements or other inadequate storage areas where security and environmental controls are absent. Only three counties are storing records in facilities that meet archival standards.

Recommendation. South Carolina should begin a program to encourage local governments to provide environmentally protected, secure storage for valuable local government records.

a) The Archives should distribute to local governments standards for the renovation or construction of on-site storage areas as part of the

statewide program.

b) The State Historical Records Advisory Board with the Association of County Governments, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, the Association of School District Superintendents, and the Archives should form a task force to:

- 1) select sites for the construction of either county or regional inactive records storage facilities;
- 2) submit recommendations for state aid and other funding.



*Dwindling storage
space relegates
many valuable
government
records to
basements*



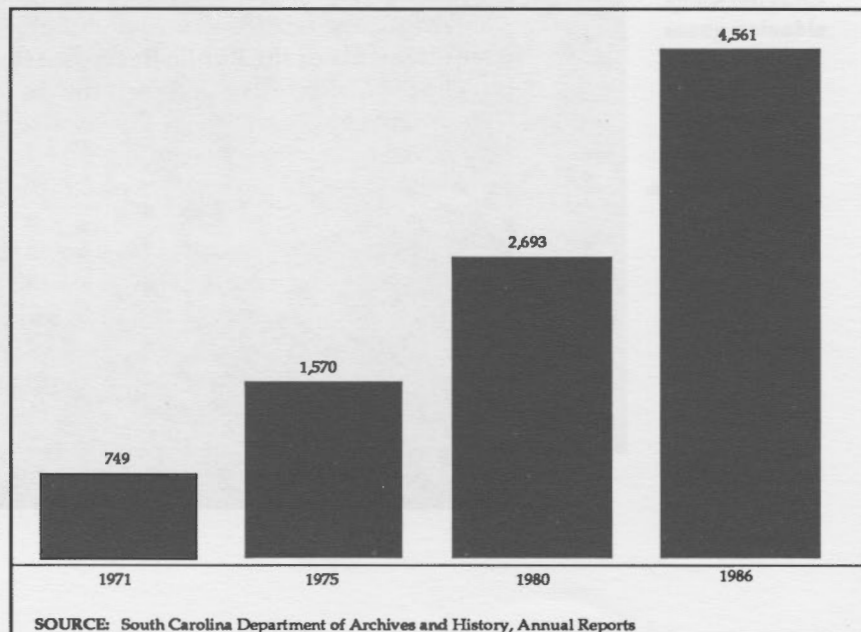
... and attics.

Finding 4. Valuable information is endangered because programs to microfilm local government records are inadequate and often fail to meet archival standards.

If the film meets archival standards, microfilming preserves information, makes the information available through reproduction, and, of course, saves space. The Archives has written standards on equipment and processes, but their effectiveness is limited because they are neither published nor circulated statewide.

The Archives also administers two programs to film local records. Under one of the programs it films, cost-free, records it selects because of their age and permanent value. Under the other it films, at cost, more recent records of permanent or long-term value that local officials select. Given its resources, the Archives can do no more. But it fails to meet the demands of local government officials for microfilming services. As a result, many local officials have begun in-house microfilming programs. Some of these programs are excellent. Others, however, use private vendors or equipment that often produces sub-standard film.

*Rolls of microfilm
produced by county
governments.*



"I would hope there would be greater sensitivity toward producing microfilm copies that are truly legible . . . it is very hard to spend forty-five minutes on three or four frames of microfilm trying to decipher line by line information."

Michael Trinkley
Archaeologist
Chicora Foundation

Recommendation. The state should make a local records microfilming program part of a statewide records management system, publish standards, and provide for the certification of all microfilming programs.

a) A local records microfilming program should be made part of the statewide records management system described in Recommendation 5, and ways developed to distribute standards.

b) Representatives from the State Historical Records Advisory Board, the State Budget and Control Board, the Association of County Governments, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, the South Carolina Bar, and the Association of School Superintendents should form a task force to:

1) explore the possibilities of sharing facilities or establishing regional micrographics centers to meet the demand for services;

2) make a certification program part of statewide program to ensure that programs using public funds to film local government records meet archival standards.

Finding 5. The problems of preserving local government records are too large and the resources of any single institution too small to create and discharge records management programs that will meet the requirements of the Public Records Act.

The Public Records Act directs the Archives to establish standards for many technical procedures, to authorize destruction of local records, to view and examine all local records, and to help local governments establish records management programs. However, the act ignores the 1972 Judicial Reform Act, which gave responsibility for court records to the Court Administration, and it leaves the option for the initiation of records programs with local officials. Most local officials are unable to develop records programs unaided, and the Archives, because its staff is coping with state government needs as well as local needs, is able to conduct only a reactive, intermittent program. As a result, many local records remain unprotected.

Recommendation. A uniform statewide local records management program should be developed to meet the needs of local government.

The Department of Archives and History should coordinate and systematize the program, and local governments should be given specific areas of authority and responsibility.

a) The Public Records Act should be amended to allow all political subdivisions to participate with the state in a truly cooperative statewide records management program. The jurisdiction of the Archives vis-a-vis the Court Administration regarding court records should be clarified. The responsibility and culpability of records custodians and records officers should be clearly delineated. And the participation of all local governments in the program should be required.

b) The Archives should be given funds to:

- 1) develop a permanent statewide training program;
- 2) circulate standards and publish a comprehensive manual on all aspects of records management;
- 3) join with the Association of County Governments, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, and the Budget and Control Board to start a program to certify local government records management programs.

c) The State Historical Records Advisory Board working with the Association of County Governments, the Municipal Association of South Carolina, the Association of School District Superintendents, and the Archives should explore ways to establish an information exchange network to monitor records management activity in South Carolina. The feasibility of joining an existing network—one sponsored by Clemson University or the State Library's LION system—should be studied. The network should track the creation and implementation of records schedules, supply an inventory of records maintained by local governments, and analyze the effectiveness of the program.

PART III. NON-GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Introduction

Programs to care for private historical records have existed in South Carolina since the 18th century. The Charleston Library Society has the oldest. The Society was incorporated by colonial charter in 1754 and it began its collection soon after with member donations of historical records on many subjects. In 1855, the South Carolina Historical Society was organized to collect records on subjects relating to South Carolina history. Over the years, other programs were formed. Colleges and universities established archives to document their history or developed special collections to support faculty and student research. Community groups contributed material to public libraries. Local historical societies accepted material on the history of their areas. In the 1960s and the 1970s the number of programs increased rapidly, their growth spurred by the unprecedented interest in history generated by the state's tricentennial, the American Revolution bicentennial, the availability of grant money, and the rising interest in "finding one's roots." Today about 150 institutions in the state qualify as historical records repositories—either because they accepted custody of collections of historical records from donors, or because they established an institutional archives. Three historical societies and a few universities and colleges have regularly funded programs, but most are in smaller institutions whose primary functions are not the care of historical records. Most historical records programs, because they compete for resources with their institution's chief program, are unable to adequately care for the records in their custody. Among the records at risk are those of individuals—farmers, textile workers, housewives, clergymen, businessmen, politicians—and of institutions—colleges, churches, social organizations.

Institutions that hold valuable non-government records fall into one of four categories: county libraries, historical societies, college and university repositories, and other historical records repositories.

County Libraries

County libraries hold a variety of genealogical and historical materials, but most are only accidental historical records repositories. Their archival material is neither actively acquired nor of primary concern. Their historical records collections grow from the donations of community groups, organizations, and individuals who see county libraries as a natural repository for historical records—county libraries have ongoing budgets and professional management; they provide access to their holdings; and they are part of South Carolina's state library network with its impressive potential for the exchange of information about holdings.

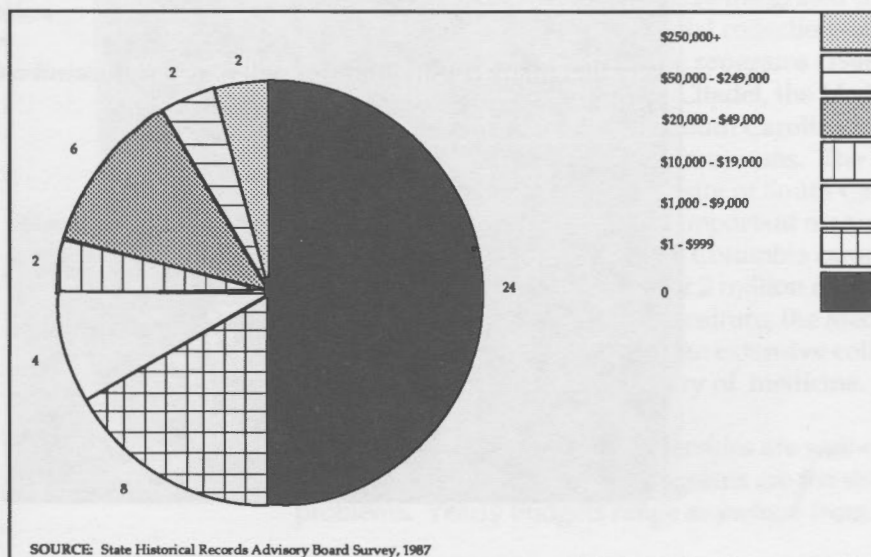
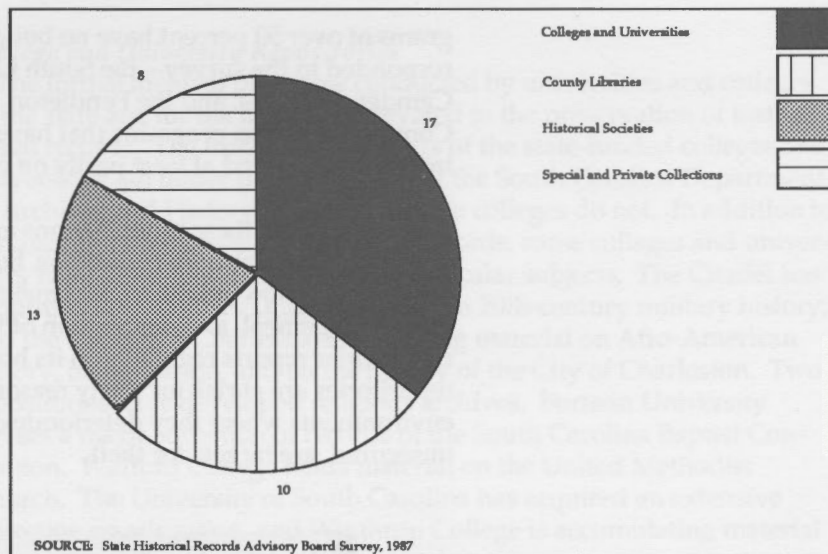
County library budgets, however, do not usually allow for the preservation, arrangement, or description of historically valuable holdings. Consequently, historical records are often treated as part of the normal workflow. They are not separated and stored archivally in secure containers. Instead, they are integrated into the library collections where they share with books the same shelves, the same filing cabinets, the same staff, the same security system, and the same temperature and humidity controls.

It is unlikely that many county libraries will play a significant role in the collection and preservation of the state's historical records. They do, however, provide a model for institutional networking, and they may be able to serve as distribution centers for various publications on archival issues.

Historical Societies

Aside from the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, most historical societies in the state are less than 30 years old and are largely the product of a recent upsurge of interest in local history. These organizations collect artifacts, promote the preservation of historic buildings, sponsor talks on local history, and collect records on the history of their geographical areas. Forty-two percent consider their archival programs their primary function, but their resources are usually meager. Local governments provide some programs with partial funding, but the pro-

*Types of
repositories
surveyed.*



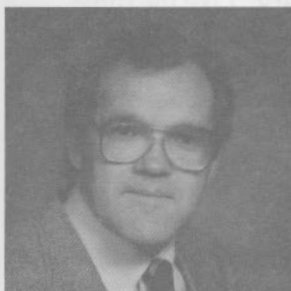
*Funding allocated
for archives in
surveyed
repositories.*

grams of over 50 percent have no budget. Only three institutions who responded to the survey—the South Carolina Historical Society, the Camden Archives, and the Pendleton Historical and Recreational Commission—run programs that have regular funding. And even these institutions depend at least partly on contributions.

The records in these organizations are kept under a variety of conditions. All hold valuable collections, but most lack room, are without active acquisition programs, and make little progress with the conservation, arrangement, and description of their records. Only one of the repositories reports regularly on its holdings. Records in most of these repositories are at risk for many reasons: they are kept in uncontrolled environments where they deteriorate quickly, and most, because they are unsecured, are targets for theft.

Research area in the Camden Archives—one of the few historical societies that receives regular funding.





"A friends organization provides us with twenty-five to thirty-five thousand each year, but the use of the money is restricted . . . it cannot be used to pay rent . . ."

Allen Stokes
Director
South Caroliniana
Library

College and University Repositories

The formal archival programs conducted by universities and colleges in the state are, for the most part, devoted to the preservation of institutional records. The institutional records of the state-funded colleges and universities fall under the jurisdiction of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Those of private colleges do not. In addition to conducting programs to care for their records, some colleges and universities have developed collections on particular subjects. The Citadel has acquired more than 66,000 items related to 20th-century military history, and the College of Charleston is collecting material on Afro-American history, on education, and on the history of the City of Charleston. Two repositories have developed religious archives. Furman University houses a major collection of records of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Wofford College holds material on the United Methodist Church. The University of South Carolina has acquired an extensive collection on education, and Winthrop College is accumulating material on women and on the Catawba Indians.

A number of the institutions have integrated their archival programs into their library as part of a special collections division. Clemson University has the oldest of these programs (1946), Erskine College the most recent (1982). Three—The Citadel, the Medical University of South Carolina, and the University of South Carolina in Columbia—run their archival programs through their museums. The University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina have also established special libraries that hold important manuscript collections. The South Caroliniana Library on the Columbia campus of the University of South Carolina holds more than 2.2 million manuscripts that cover all aspects of the state's history and culture; the Medical University's Waring Historical Library holds an extensive collection of records that provide information on the history of medicine.

Because the colleges and universities are well-established institutions, it is not surprising that their programs are the strongest. Still there are problems. Yearly budgets range anywhere from zero for most, to as



"One institution can't begin to do the work that needs to be done to preserve the history of black people in the state of South Carolina."

Myrtle Glascoe
Avery Research
Center for Afro-
American History and
Culture

much as \$263,000, for the South Caroliniana Library. Like the three historical societies that have regular funding, however, the Caroliniana Library is also partly dependent on contributions. Less than half the institutions have a clearly defined acquisition policy. Little more than half have staff with professional training. And some use staff assigned to other programs to carry out all facets of their archival operation.

Other Historical Records Repositories

Eight respondents to the survey said their institutions held religious, museum, military, or business archives. Had the numbers been greater, this report would have treated the four collection areas separately, but there are too few to provide an acceptable sample. It is alarming, however, that although these collection areas and others—records of black churches, of the textile industry, and of organizations like the Grange—are common throughout the nation, they are grievously underrepresented in South Carolina. Four of the respondents reported extensive holdings for their size—several thousand items covering from 10 to 30 linear feet—and indicated they held large collections of photographs. One viewed its archival program—in this instance, the institution's own archives—as its primary function, yet it permits access to its documents only by appointment.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1. Sixty-three percent of the repositories surveyed reported that their primary purpose was not the preservation of historical records.

Most of the repositories reported that the care of historical records is often a "stepchild" to more visible activities such as exhibits, the preservation of historic buildings, or the care and circulation of publications. As a result, historical records, which must compete with artifacts, and books, and other published materials for already scant funding, have little money allocated to their care.

Recommendation. A statewide consortium of colleges, universities,

libraries, and historical records repositories should be formed to suggest ways to consolidate collections or share resources.

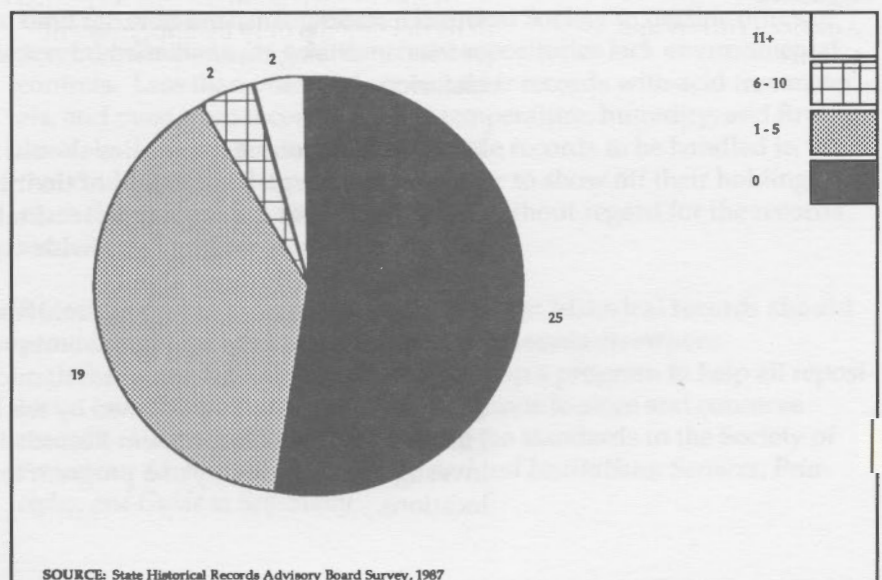
Institutional cooperation and support is essential if the funding problems concerning the care of South Carolina's non-government records are to be remedied. A statewide consortium of colleges, universities, libraries, and historical records repositories should explore the possibility of strengthening the larger repositories to:

- a) Consolidate the collections of smaller repositories into the collections of larger and better funded and equipped repositories in return for microfilm of the material transferred.
- b) Devise a program whereby the smaller institutions that choose to retain their collections could share resources.

Finding 2. Few of the institutions surveyed assign professionals to care for their historical records.

Only three institutions surveyed assign more than five staff members to care for their historical records. Many borrow staff from their other programs, some use volunteers, and 31 percent employ no staff at all to care for their historical holdings.

Number of staff assigned to care for historical records in surveyed repositories.



"... larger repositories should be strengthened—by legislative allocation if necessary—in order to provide support and microfilm services to the smaller ones in their section."

R. Nicholas Olsberg
"Report to the Advisory Board"

Recommendation. The state's major repositories should develop professional training programs for staff in all repositories holding historical records. The major repositories should:

a) Work with the State Historical Records Advisory Board to seek a National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) grant to direct a statewide training program in the administration, care, and microfilming of archival records.

b) Participate in activities suggested in Statewide Services Recommendation 3 to increase training opportunities.

c) Set up internships within repositories for college and university students in archival education programs.

Finding 3. Access to materials in South Carolina repositories is limited for many reasons.

A glaring shortcoming of most repositories is the absence of guidelines and plans for the use of their historical records. While the South Carolina Historical Society, the South Caroliniana Library, and other large private repositories have published guides to their holdings, 26 of the institutions surveyed do not report their holdings to anyone, 28 are without finding aids, and libraries tend to emphasize control through entries on catalog cards—a method not well suited to the description of historical records.

Recommendation. Repositories should make their archival records accessible through publication of their holdings, the compilation of finding aids, and the regular dissemination of the information. The larger repositories within a statewide consortium of colleges, universities, and public libraries should:

a) Devise a regional "adopt an archives" program whereby larger institutions could help smaller institutions manage their collections.

b) Conduct a statewide program to microfilm historical records according to standards published by the Department of Archives and History (see Local Government Records Recommendation 4a) and investigate the feasibility of a program to microfilm records in scattered locations.

"I would like more staff, but I would not even think about more staff until I had more space. In the confines of the South Caroliniana Library we don't have enough area for everyone to do their work adequately."

Allen Stokes
Director
South Caroliniana
Library

c) Compile a list of all records filmed for inclusion in the statewide data base suggested in Statewide Services Recommendation 2a.

d) Encourage the smaller repositories to use the *South Carolina Historical Magazine* or some other periodical to regularly publish information about their holdings.

Finding 4. Historical records in many of the repositories are housed in conditions unsuited to their needs.

Most institutions face overwhelming odds in their attempts to care for their historical records. Most cannot afford proper housing, supplies, or conservation tools. As a result, records in many repositories are inadequately housed, often in appalling conditions. Threats to security are common. In some repositories, historical records are stacked on shelves, are bound and cataloged as books, or are stored in filing cabinets with other material. A few institutions that lack space have sent their records outside where they are locked in vaults, held by an individual, or on deposit with a local museum or library.

Even the better funded South Carolina Historical Society and the South Caroliniana Library need more space to house and process records. A shortage of space has forced the Historical Society to decline offers of several collections. In addition, most repositories lack environmental controls. Less than one-third protect their records with acid free materials, and most store records without temperature, humidity, and fire controls. Many repositories allow fragile records to be handled in ways that could destroy them, and some, eager to show off their holdings, place their valuable records on display without regard for the records' security and preservation.

Recommendation. Repositories that accept historical records should provide appropriate care or deposit the records elsewhere.

a) The larger repositories should develop a program to help all repositories establish or strengthen their programs to store and conserve records. They should do this by using the standards in the Society of American Archivists' *Evaluation of Archival Institutions: Services, Principles, and Guide to Self-Study*.

b) The State Historical Records Advisory Board working with the Palmetto Archives, Libraries and Museums Council on Preservation should identify conservation needs using information provided by the grant project suggested in Statewide Services Recommendation 1.

c) In conjunction with Recommendation 2a, the State Historical Records Advisory Board and the appropriate institution concerned with archival education should seek an NHPRC grant to direct a statewide training program in the administration, care, and microfilming of archival records. This training would enable custodians to identify preservation needs.

d) The larger repositories should apply for a grant to assess the content and condition of historical photographs in the custody of repositories across the state.

e) The state should support institutions trying to build or upgrade records storage areas by circulating standards for new buildings, obtaining grants for adapting existing buildings, providing consultation, and enlisting the support of budget-makers.

f) The state, through the conservation facilities of the Department of Archives and History, should establish a state conservation service center to provide statewide advisory and restoration services.

*One-room
schoolhouse in
Blackville, S.C.
ca. 1930.*



PART IV. STATEWIDE SERVICES

"Records of statewide importance should be placed in settings of statewide quality...it is simply too expensive to bring every local repository up to the standards required to manage archives effectively when they have only small holdings to begin with."

R. Nicholas Olsberg
"Report to the
Advisory Board"

Introduction

Many of South Carolina's historical records face the same problems. Many are in impoverished repositories. An alarming number are inadequately conserved, are cared for by poorly trained staff, and are inaccessible. All are undervalued by the public.

The institutions and organizations with archival responsibilities in South Carolina have, to some extent, worked together to educate their staffs and the public on archival matters, to share resources, to lobby for common interests, and otherwise to advance the state's archives. Vehicles for cooperative education have included the Archives and Special Collections Roundtable of the South Carolina Library Association and the South Carolina Confederation of Local Historical Societies, both increasingly active over the last decade. More recently, the Palmetto Archives, Libraries and Museums Council on Preservation has formed to promote book and paper preservation. The South Carolina Chapter of the Special Libraries Association has joined local chapters of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators in bringing library, corporate, and government information professionals together. With grant funding, the South Carolina State Library sponsored work that resulted in John Hammond Moore's *Research Materials in South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1967), and more recently the South Carolina Historical Society helped produce guides to its own holdings as well as to the collections of the South Caroliniana Library, the Waring Library at the Medical University of South Carolina, the Charleston Library Society, the special collections departments of Winthrop College and the College of Charleston, and religious records in the state.

As useful as these efforts have been and as rapidly as they have

multiplied in the last several years, the state still lacks the coordinated, comprehensive services needed to solve the problems plaguing its archives.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1. No single group provides statewide leadership to plan ways to solve problems associated with South Carolina's historical records programs.

No institution or group has provided the leadership that is needed to find solutions to the problems of historical records programs. The State Historical Records Advisory Board has not been an effective rallying point; the South Carolina Department of Archives and History is unable to cope with all the needs of government and can give only infrequent aid to other programs; and most colleges, universities, libraries, and historical societies assist only their own members. The issues affecting historical records programs will not be resolved until one group, exercising statewide leadership defines the problems and develops guidelines to promote solutions. The need to plan is vital because advances in technology, shifts in personnel, passage of state laws, cuts in funding, and the march of time all threaten valuable information.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should be established in state law and should provide a way to begin statewide planning for the state's historical records programs.

a) The state legislature should establish the Advisory Board in state law; it should give the Board state funding, and it should fund one or more staff positions for the Board.

b) The Board should seek funding to:

1) establish the procedures to carry out the recommendations outlined in this report;

2) identify the various participants, such as historical records repositories and their supporters and professional associations. The Board should explore opportunities for cooperation at the state and national level; develop a legislative agenda; conduct studies of specific



"A central data system would be very useful. The traditional guide is often outdated before it can get into print because collections are always growing."
Brent Holcomb
Genealogist

problems—housing, collecting areas, resources, automation; investigate funding sources for specific projects; and coordinate the publication of standards and the establishment of training programs.

c) The Board working with the Department of Archives and History should develop a plan for cooperative activities and shared resources.

Finding 2. This report indicates a pressing need for a program to obtain for preservation and user access, information on holdings of historical records statewide.

Because South Carolina has no system to identify repositories holding archival records, to pinpoint their needs, and to provide information about their holdings, many of the state's historical records are at risk and largely untapped. Repositories surveyed indicate overwhelmingly that they would like to participate in a program that would help them to report on and care for their records and make them accessible.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should form a task force to plan an automated statewide network containing information about the location, condition, and content of the state's historical records.

a) The Board should appoint a task force including representatives of non-government and government historical records repositories, researchers, and automation specialists to conduct a study of repositories to uncover all valuable historical records, to identify preservation needs, and to establish priorities for action. It should then draw on the survey being conducted by the New York Historic Resources Center at Cornell University and study South Carolina's State Library Network to make long-range plans for the development of a statewide data base.

b) After the survey, the task force should create a master guide to the state's historical records repositories giving brief descriptions of the facilities and their holdings. The NHPRC's *Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories* would be a good model.

c) The task force should develop a program using the Machine Readable Cataloging for Archives and Manuscript Control (MARC-AMC) based reporting form to enable repositories to circulate information on their holdings.

d) The task force should make possible statewide participation in an automated system by providing training in bibliographic standards and automated programs. This training should be coordinated with existing educational programs in this area, such as those at the College of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina.

Finding 3. Many individuals who care for archival records, from volunteers to skilled professionals, need and want more training.

There is a desperate need for post-appointment training at all repositories. Many individuals with archival responsibilities, both staff and volunteers, lack specialized training. Many who are trained lack the opportunity for professional development.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should enlist representatives from historical records repositories, schools, and professional associations to identify training requirements and devise solutions.

a) The Board should form a group to encourage archivists and records administrators to join professional organizations—the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA), the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the National Association for Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA), the Special Libraries Association (SLA), and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)—to create forums for discussing and monitoring important archival issues. It should also gather, for circulation, membership applications from national organizations and from statewide organizations such as the Archives Roundtable of the South Carolina Library Association or the local ARMA chapter.

b) The group should provide information statewide on professional and technical issues and should publish a clearinghouse newsletter to circulate the information.

c) The group should encourage the state's professional organizations to further the professional development of the state's archivists and records managers by:

- 1) sponsoring nationally available workshops and speakers;
- 2) developing workshops run by the University of South Caro-



"There are a lot of important private manuscripts that are squirrelled away in a trunk, in an attic, or in a bank vault . . . I think we can do a lot more to make people aware of the need to . . . preserve their family papers."

David Chesnutt
Editor
The Papers of Henry Laurens

lina and historical organizations.

d) The Department of Archives and History and the Research and Training Division of General Services should develop statewide training workshops on the standards and procedures used for all aspects of archival work.

Finding 4. There is an urgent need to encourage the identification and preservation of records not yet in any archives because many subjects relating to South Carolina history are underdocumented.

Various subjects relating to South Carolina history—the labor movement, the textile industry, agricultural developments, the civil rights movement—are underdocumented because there has been no systematic effort to locate and organize their records. Those already in archives will be located when the steps suggested in Recommendation 2 are taken, but the state must develop a strategy for identifying and preserving those still outside archives.

Recommendation. The State Historical Records Advisory Board should create a system to identify and locate records of historical value outside archives and to provide for their care.

a) The State Historical Records Advisory Board should encourage repositories to cooperate by working with them to refine their acquisition policies, to write guidelines that will identify gaps in documentation, and to prevent the overlapping of collections in the future.

b) The State Historical Records Advisory Board and representatives of non-government repositories should publish, for statewide circulation, a handbook for individuals and non-archival organizations who may be holding documents of historical significance. The handbook should alert them to the value of their records by listing issues that need documentation, and it should provide them with a list of institutions that might welcome their records.

c) The Department of Archives and History should develop guidelines to allow government officials to identify the issues of historical significance in their private papers and government records.

d) The State Historical Records Advisory Board should develop a task force of historians, archaeologists, preservationists, archivists, and

"... in South Carolina, history is a business. Tourism builds substantially on history... and historical records repositories within the state are a source of information for people who are trying to package and sell history."

David Moltke-Hansen
Director
South Carolina Historical Society

researchers to plan ways to document one theme of South Carolina history as a model.

Finding 5. Public support is essential for the effectiveness of South Carolina's archival programs, especially in times of tight budgets, yet the state's archival community does not have a campaign to promote the use of historical records or to enlist support for issues affecting its preservation.

Public support is essential for the success of historical records programs in South Carolina. But the public—creators of records and potential users—has little understanding of the value of the information in historical records or the role of the archivist in their preservation.

Recommendation. South Carolina's archival community should promote historical records programs by developing ways to educate citizens on the value of historical records.

a) Archivists, historians, librarians, and associations of local government should coordinate advocacy work and monitor legislation affecting records programs.

b) A close relationship with the news media should be established to introduce the state's citizens to issues involving historical records and archival programs.

c) The benefits from effectively managed historical resources should be publicized: well-run programs create jobs, provide access to important information, promote tourism, provide educational material, and save taxpayer money through efficient records management.

d) Exhibits and educational programs highlighting the administrative and social value of records should be developed and ways to incorporate them into public programs investigated.

PART V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Introduction

The Board recognizes that broad participation in the development of a program to ensure the preservation of South Carolina's historically valuable records is essential.

Following the recommendations in this report the Board urges the following steps:

A. The State Historical Records Advisory Board will:

1. Lead efforts to coordinate and allocate resources to meet the needs of repositories in selecting and preserving historically valuable records.
2. Meet regularly to set and to publish guidelines for action.
3. Seek the support of the legislature, local governments, private institutions, and the public to finance and to encourage participation in a statewide records management program.
4. Establish a way to review regularly progress in implementing the recommendations of this report.
5. Establish a process to update annually and publish for general circulation an assessment of the state's historical records.

B. The Department of Archives and History should incorporate the recommendations of this report into its long range planning. The Archives must continue to assume responsibility for state and local records. It should encourage state and local governments to develop effective records management programs. And it should cooperate with the Board by sharing its expertise and equipment, providing training workshops, and acting as a clearinghouse for information.

C. Professional organizations such as the Palmetto Archives, Libraries and Museums Council on Preservation, the South Carolina Library Association, the Federation of Museums, the Municipal Association of

South Carolina, the State Bar, the Association of County Governments, and the Association of School Superintendents should consider this report and adopt resolutions that identify the role they should play in addressing issues of primary concern.

D. Cultural institutions and societies, because they use the information in archival records to complement their exhibits, books, and research, should contribute to the preservation of information by supporting records management and archival preservation.

E. The state legislature must strengthen the state's public records laws as recommended above, must provide funds for a statewide records program, and should appropriate money for construction of a spacious, modern state archives and for buying up-to-date conservation equipment. Legislators should investigate the condition of public records within their own districts and show concern for proper records management in state agencies.

F. State and local officials should lobby for and support the implementation of a records management program for government offices and agencies. Savings in space and storage costs, and the problems associated with new office technology justify the time and effort needed for such programs.

G. All citizens should recognize the value of historical records and the benefits of records management. They should support archival efforts by aiding historical societies and other organizations and by providing volunteer help. Because a group is responsible for its records, members of social organizations, congregations, political action groups, neighborhood associations, and businesses should work to ensure the archival maintenance of their records.

Footnotes:

1. Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time; The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (New York: The Free Press, 1986): xiii.
2. Robert H. Woody, "The Public Records of South Carolina," *The American Archivist* II (1939): 246.
3. *Ibid.*, 253.
4. *Reports and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina*, 1899, 2:390.
5. South Carolina Daughters of the American Revolution, *Yearbook*, 1934: 31.
6. Woody, "The Public Records of South Carolina": 245.
7. J. H. Easterby, "The Archives of South Carolina," *The American Archivist* XV (1952): 241-46.
8. Woody, "The Public Records of South Carolina": 258 n.

APPENDIX

Methodology

When the State Historical Records Advisory Board accepted a National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) grant for this report, it expected the project to take two years. But the Board had not met for four years, and the project got off to a slow start. Eventually, the Board formed committees to assess the conditions of the state's historical records and planned surveys of the repositories in which the records were kept. By October 1982, it became obvious that the project would take longer than two years. The staff of the Department of Archives and History had been conducting much of the research, but budget constraints forced them to turn their attention away from the project. In July 1983, the Board set its report aside and returned the remaining grant money to the NHPRC.

Work on the project resumed in October 1987 when George Vogt, the Department of Archives and History's new director, formed a three-member staff task force to help the Board to complete the report. Because much of the information gathered five years earlier was obsolete, the Board initiated new surveys, up-dated old information, and benefited from published assessment reports. It also held two meetings, one on 18 November 1987 and the other on 22 April 1988, to discuss the project. On 5 May 1988 it convened to present its final report at a public hearing at the State Museum in Columbia in conjunction with the 1988 meeting of the Southeastern Archives and Records Conference.

The methodology used to gather information on state and local government records and on non-government records in South Carolina's historical records repositories is outlined below.

A. State government records. Between 1981 and 1983, the Board enlisted staff from the Department of Archives and History to begin gathering statistical data. Some work was done, and in 1987, the Board's task force

updated the earlier investigation by gathering data on the Archives' program to care for state records and by working with Archives' staff to mail questionnaires to 125 state agencies, 12 legislative bodies, 11 divisions of the State Budget and Control Board, three components of the Judicial Department, and 10 state-supported colleges and universities. Ninety-three of the questionnaires were returned. The information in them has been analyzed for inclusion in the report. The Board also used information gathered from individual interviews with state officials and supplied by consultants brought in by the Archives in 1988 to review its program.

B. Local Government Records. In 1982, the Board focussed its attention on the records of the state's municipal governments. With the help of staff from the Department of Archives and History, it circulated questionnaires to 266 municipalities and interviewed officials in 60 towns and cities. One hundred twenty-nine questionnaires were returned. The Board used the information in a report describing the conditions of South Carolina's municipal records. Aspects of the 1982 analysis are included in this report. When work on the report resumed in 1987, the Board's newly appointed task force enlisted the help of the Department of Archives and History's local records staff to mail 242 questionnaires to the state's 46 counties and 91 school districts and to analyze the replies. The Board also arranged interviews with local officials. Analyses of the 131 questionnaires that were returned, of data taken from the interviews with officials, and of observations made by the consultants who reviewed the Department of Archives and History's program are included in the report.

C. Non-Government Records. In 1982, the Board mailed 162 seven-page questionnaires to libraries, colleges, universities, and historical organizations. The response was disappointing. A telephone survey by the staff of the Department of Archives and History revealed the reason—those surveyed found the questionnaire either too complex, too long, or both. The Board then mailed a revised questionnaire to 212 repositories. One hundred nineteen responded, and of these, 48 agreed to answer a more detailed survey. In 1987, when work on the report resumed, the task

force returned for updating the responses of the 48 repositories that participated in the detailed survey and said that if the questionnaire was not returned, the original information would be used to tabulate results. Twenty-eight questionnaires were updated. In addition, the Board scheduled interviews with genealogists, university librarians, and officials in historical records repositories. The information taken from the surveys and interviews is included in this report.

Acknowledgements

Phase 1, 1982

Public Records Committee:

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GLOSSARY

Because some of the terms used in this report will be unfamiliar to many readers, they are explained below. Some of the definitions are based on those given in *A Dictionary of Archival Terminology*, edited by Peter Walne for the International Council on Archives.

Access	The availability of records for consultation as a result of legal authorization and the existence of finding aids.
Appraisal	Determining the eventual disposal of records based upon their archival value. Also referred to as evaluation, review, or selection.
Archival value	Those values—administrative, fiscal, legal, evidential and/or informational—which justify the indefinite or permanent retention of records.
Archives	An institution responsible for acquiring, preserving, and making accessible records of archival value; the historical records repository where materials are located; the historical records of an organization or agency.
Disposal	Disposing of old records after their appraisal and the expiration of their retention periods as provided for by legislation or regulations.
General schedule	A records schedule governing specified series of records common to more than one agency. Sometimes called common records schedule.
Machine-readable records	Records whose contents may be read only by using a machine.

Manuscript	A handwritten or typed document.
Preservation	As the term is used here it means storing and protecting records; all processes and operations involved in the protection of records and the restoration and repair of documents.
Processing	The recording of acquisitions and the arrangement, description, and preservation of records.
Records management	The area of management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use, preservation, and disposal of records.
Records schedule	A document that describes the recurring records of an agency, institution, or administrative unit, specifies the preservation of those with archival value, and authorizes the destruction of those without archival value at the end of retention periods.
Retention period	The length of time, usually based on an estimate of the frequency of use, that records should be retained in offices before they are transferred to a records center or an archives.
Series	Items or documents arranged in accordance with a filing plan or maintained as a unit because they relate to a particular function or subject, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship relating to their creation or use.

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